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ABSTRACT

This document is the self-study portion of the Standards and Procedures for Voluntary Accreditation of Early Childhood Education Programs in Missouri. The self-study, an opportunity for programs to demonstrate their ability to meet certain standards, consists of quality indicators under 6 major headings: (1) provide a healthy and safe environment (45 major indicators); (2) foster physical and intellectual growth and development and creative expression (28 major indicators); (3) build positive self-esteem and individual responsibility (15 major indicators); (4) develop and maintain positive interaction of children and adults (11 major indicators); (5) communication and coordination between home and center (10 major indicators); (6) maintain effective personnel communications and efficient management practices (14 major indicators). The document also includes an application form and other forms for accreditation. (JW)

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Standards & Procedures for Voluntary Accreditation of Early Childhood Education Programs in Missouri

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Voluntary Accreditation had its beginning in 1981 with the formation of a committee to explore the establishment of standards for a quality early childhood education program under the leadership of Mildred Winter. The original committee explored and eventually created the basic *Standards and Procedures* for the Voluntary Accreditation of Early Childhood Education Programs. This has been up-dated and there have been minor revision, but it still has the basic structure, content, and process of the original.

Since that time (1981), two more *Standards and Procedures* have been added--one for Infant/Toddler and one for School Age Child Care. These have been written, tested, and revised by members of the Missouri Boards for Voluntary Accreditation with help from volunteers and consultants from Licensing, DESE Special Education and Community Education. In total, at least 100 people have helped to create the current (1993) documents and process. To all these people much credit and appreciation is due--for their enthusiasm, on-going support, understanding, and creativity.

To the Presidents of the Voluntary Accreditation Boards and to the Coordinator go special thanks for their leadership, wisdom, and unflagging commitment:

1984	Maya Zuck	1993	Caroline Rosser
1987	Mildred Winter	1983	Barbara Fischer, Coordinator
1989	Carolyn Rybicki		

To that original voluntary accreditation committee and to Mildred Winter gratitude and special acknowledgment is given. Members of the Missouri Committee on Voluntary Accreditation of Early Childhood Education Programs are as follows:

Carolyn Bjurstrom	Phyllis Jones	Carol Schrader	Sue Vartuli
Sally Cohn	Barbara Kohm	Maxine Schuler	J. Valdon Vire
Dwayne Crompton	Susie Mornatz	The Honorable Sue Shear	Fern Webster
Judy Duden	Kathryn Nelson	Shirley Stubbs	Mildred Winter
Barbara Fischer	P. J. Newell	Clementine Thomas	Maya Zuck
Erika Gerth	Esther Ongoa	Louise Tipler	
Stevie Hoffman	Susan Prutzman	Kathy Thornburg	

VOLUNTARY ACCREDITATION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS
(2 1/2 - 6 YEARS)

INTRODUCTION

Learning that once occurred primarily in the home is now happening in early childhood programs outside the home for increasing numbers of Missouri's young children. Because of the impact of early education on the child's personal and academic success, it is important that families and early childhood program personnel provide the best possible environment for learning during the formative preprimary years.

Missouri has no laws or regulations establishing accreditation requirements for early childhood and school age child care programs. State statutes authorize the Department of Health to license child care programs. However, a state statute effective August 28, 1993, requires unlicensed, exempt religious child care programs, as well as summer camps, graded boarding schools, and nursery schools to meet health, sanitation, and fire and safety standards.

The Missouri Voluntary Accreditation process was developed in response to a need to provide guidelines for appropriate high quality programs for children that go beyond those authorized by state statutes. It involves no mandatory controls; the decision to seek accreditation is voluntary.

Accreditation standards (quality indicators) are based on *respect for and acceptance of the unique strengths and needs of each child*; *knowledge of how children grow and develop*; and *developmentally appropriate program planning and guidance*. Standards speak to characteristics of a program that is without bias, one that empowers children, families, and staff to participate in a learning environment and curriculum that is relevant and accurately reflects the population it serves. Accreditation standards also provide for nationally mandated policies, environment, and procedures that accommodate the special needs of each individual child.

Accreditation is based on a program's completed Self-Study and subsequent on-site peer review. The standards (or indicators) allow for a broad range of teaching and learning philosophies. All programs are not alike--each one is unique and this uniqueness is respected and encouraged.

Accreditation is a stamp of approval, recognizing those programs that are striving for excellence. It provides child caregivers with access to standards that serve as guidelines to quality programs. Accreditation also serves as a guide to parents who want to choose the best available program for their children.

ACCREDITATION PROCESS

A program's eligibility is determined by the following:

1. Serves children within the age range of six weeks through elementary school age.

2. Has been in operation for at least one year.

3 Has purchased and completed the Self-Study in the age appropriate Standards and Procedures for Voluntary Accreditation.

Self-Studies are available from the Missouri Center for Voluntary Accreditation for:
Infant/Toddler Program (6 weeks - 30 weeks)
Program for 2 1/2 - 6 year olds
School Age Child Care Program

The Self-Study is to be undertaken thoughtfully by the staff and viewed as a professional growth experience for each person involved. All ratings are to be based on the current situation and not on future plans. Use comment columns generously to explain the program more fully.

APPLICATION

The program applying for accreditation will:

1. Submit application for accreditation, which includes:
   a. Completed Self-Study
   b. Necessary documentation materials
   c. Accreditation fee, with check made payable to: Missouri Center for Voluntary Accreditation.
      (1) The accreditation fee is determined by the number of children enrolled in the program. (Consult the current fact sheet for the fee schedule.)
      (2) The program also agrees to pay the mileage expenses of accreditation review team members ($.20 per mile), to be paid to the team members at the time of the visit to the program. An effort will be made to assign team members living near the program site.

2. Accreditation materials may be submitted to the Voluntary Accreditation Center anytime during the year. (Materials must be received before March 1 for nine-month programs (September-May) in order to allow adequate time to assign the review team and to allow time for observation and exit interview before the end of the school year. If materials are received after March 1 the accreditation period may have to be extended to the next academic year.

ACCREDITATION REVIEW TEAM MEMBERSHIP

After checking the submitted Self-Study and the required documentation materials for completeness and accuracy, the coordinator of the Missouri Center for Voluntary Accreditation will ask the appropriate regional chairperson to assign a team to visit the center for the purpose of validating the program's Self-Study.

1. The size of the program will determine the number of team members.
2. A two-person team will be made up of persons from two of the three categories below. Larger teams will have balanced representation from all three categories if possible. All team members will have been trained in the accreditation process.
   a. A director/administrator having a minimum of two years experience teaching children.
   b. An early childhood education/child development professional, including teacher educators with a strong knowledge base in early childhood, recreation, or related area.
   c. A parent or other individual who is knowledgeable and concerned about children and does not fit in either of the other two categories.
3. The program will be notified in advance of the membership of the team assigned and may request an alternate team member with good reason.
4. The review team leader will be responsible for arranging the team visit, for the exit interview with the director and staff of the program, and for the team's full report to the Missouri Center for Voluntary Accreditation. A copy of the team's report will be given to the program director.

RECOMMENDATION FOR ACCREDITATION

Recommendation for accreditation requires team agreement and acceptable Self-Study ratings on all circled items. The review team report will define program strengths and limitations and will recommend one of the two following options:

(1) Program approved for accreditation
(2) Time extension granted to program

ACCREDITATION APPROVAL AND ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATE OF VOLUNTARY ACCREDITATION

The coordinator of the Missouri Center for Voluntary Accreditation will receive the Self-Study, the Review Team Document, and the review team's exit interview report of program strengths and limitations. If all is in order, the coordinator will take the review team's recommendation for accreditation to the Missouri Board for Voluntary Accreditation of Childhood Education Programs which officially grants accreditation to all programs. The board signs and issues the Certificate of Accreditation to all programs except those sponsored by the public schools. The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will sign and issue the Certificate of Accreditation to public school programs.

Programs receiving accreditation will be listed in the Directory of Accredited programs. The directory will list the program name, address, ages and number of children served, length of program day, and telephone number of contact person.

TIME EXTENSION

If there is disagreement on any circled items in the Self-Study (a team rating of "No" on an item rated "Yes" by the program; a team rating of "3" or "4" on an item rated "1" or "2" by the program), a time extension of up to, but no more than, one year from the exit interview date is granted to the program. The time extension will allow for the director and staff to raise all Self-Study items to the quality level required for accreditation. Full responsibility for the amount of time used for this work, as well as for making contact with the Review Team leader to schedule a return visit, is up to the program director. If accreditation is not achieved at the time of the second visit of the Review Team, or if the second visit of the Review Team has not been requested within one year of the exit interview date, the accreditation process is terminated and the entire Self-Study process must be re-initiated.

ACCREDITATION APPEAL

A program that completes the Self-Study and review process and fails to receive a recommendation for accreditation may appeal the decision in writing to the Missouri Board for Voluntary Accreditation.

The decision of the Missouri Board for Voluntary Accreditation of Childhood Education Programs will be final.

REACCREDITATION

At the end of the 2-year initial accreditation, the program will reapply for the second accreditation and complete the entire Self-Study process. Succeeding reaccreditations are for the full three years. The fee for reaccreditation is listed on the current Fact Sheet.

GRIEVANCE

Grievances against an accredited program may be brought to the Missouri Board for Voluntary Accreditation through the coordinator of the Missouri Center, by a staff member, parent, or community member. A detailed statement of the grievance must be in writing, signed, and sent to the Missouri Center for Voluntary Accreditation.

PLEASE NOTE: Always check the most recent FACT SHEET for any new information and the current accreditation fee schedule.

SPECIAL NEEDS

The recent American Disabilities Act, signed into law in 1990 and implemented in 1992, mandates that all child care programs establish policies and procedures that accommodate the special needs of each individual child. This national mandate poses a challenge to educators to find ways to adjust programs and facilities to meet these widely divergent special strengths and needs.

The term "special needs" emphasizes the individualizing that should occur in every child care program. This means being aware of each child's unique developmental needs and adapting expectations and daily activities to ensure that they are appropriate for both the group and each individual child in the group.

Each child is a unique person. One may be described as "gifted," another as "developmentally delayed," and another as possessing disabilities extreme enough to require special staff training. It is important that all personnel understand the varying needs of these children and know how to guide and to implement an appropriate program for each child in their care. Throughout the Self-Study there are helpful quality indicators that characterize such a program.

RESOURCES

Missouri Special Education Dissemination Center, 401 East Stewart Road, Columbia, MO 65211
Offers a wide variety of loan packets, bibliographies, videotapes, books, and manuals useful for teacher and administrators. As for full listing.

MPACT (Missouri Parents Act), 1722 South Glenstone, Suite 125, Springfield, MO 65804
Offers workshops and assistance for parents of children with disabilities.

NAEYC, 1509 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036, 1-(800) 424-2460.
Publishes a wide variety of excellent materials on curriculum, cultural diversity, health and safety, etc. The book, Developmentally Appropriate Practice, is a valuable reference for every program. Ask for a current catalog.

DIRECTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE SELF-STUDY DOCUMENT

A. RATINGS

- Each numbered item (1, 2, etc.) in the entire self-study should be rated by placing a check (✓) on the line in the appropriate column--either Yes or No, OR 1, 2, 3, 4, or N/A (not applicable).
- Checking sub-items (lettered a, b, etc.), where listed under an item, will assist in determining the rating for that item.
- All circled items must receive a rating of Yes OR a rating of 1 or 2 (depending on what is indicated) in order to be eligible for accreditation.
- The Remarks/Examples column should be used liberally. Add explanations, clarification, additional information, or indicate areas of on-going efforts toward improvement. *Your comments are very important.*

1	**-Excellent**	**Fully meets the standards**
2	**-Good**	**Generally meets the standards**
3	**-Needs improvement**	**In order to meet the standards**
4	**-Unacceptable**	**Does not meet the standards**
N/A	**-Not Applicable**	

B. DOCUMENTATION MATERIALS

Note the items throughout the Self-Study that ask for documentation, such as examples of ways in which you modify your program to meet individual needs, examples of daily activity plans, etc. Also refer to the documentation sheet included with your packet of accreditation materials. These items, along with your completed Self-Study, are to be mailed in a large envelope to the Missouri Center for Voluntary Accreditation.

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES NO 1 2 3 4 N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES
I. Provide Safe and Healthy Environment		
All program personnel share the responsibility to protect children from injury and infection. All items in this section should be carefully reviewed and rated.		
Safety		
1. At least two adults over age 18 are available to children (on the premises, within voice range, and able to assist) at all times. (Document through staff schedule.)		
2. Indoor materials, equipment, and supplies are safe and in good repair (e.g. void of sharp edges, splinters, nails, missing parts).		
3. Classroom space, doorways, bathrooms, and sinks are accessible or adapted as needed to allow all children to participate or to use with minimum adult assistance.		
4. Indoor surfaces and levels (such as steps) are manageable for use by each child.		
5. Facility is safe for children:		
___ a. Well-lighted		
___ b. Ventilated; comfortable temperature		

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES	NO	1	2	3	4	N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES
___ c. Stairways safe, well-lighted								
___ d. Windows screened safely								
___ e. Lead-free paint								
___ f. Child-proof electric outlets								
___ g. Phones working and accessible								
___ h. Exits easily accessible								
6. Floor coverings are non-slip or secured to floor.								
7. Mats are used under climbing apparatus indoors.								
8. Sound absorbent materials (such as rugs, ceiling tiles, etc.) are used to lessen the level of distracting noise for children.								
9. Dangerous materials and supplies such as medications, cleaning supplies, potentially toxic plants, etc., are inaccessible to children (out of reach or locked).								
10. Fire equipment and procedures are evident and in order. (It is recommended that you check with your local fire department for information on adequate extinguishers.)								
___ a. Fire extinguishers available and in working condition								
___ b. Smoke detectors in working condition								
___ c. Emergency evacuation procedures posted								

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES NO 1 2 3 4 N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES
___ d. Safety and security rules posted and communicated		
Frequency of drills per year _____		
Date of last drill _____		
11. There are provisions for safely reaching sinks and toilets.		
12. Hot water, where accessible to children, is a safe temperature.		
13. There is a minimum of 35 square feet of indoor space per child (not including kitchen, closets, bathroom, hallways, etc.) to allow for freedom of movement. (Include sketch with dimensions)		
14. Outdoor materials and equipment are safe and in good repair (e.g. void of sharp edges, splinters, nails, missing parts).		
15. Outdoor play space is accessible or adapted as needed to allow all children to participate.		
16. Outdoor surfaces and levels (such as steps or curbs) are manageable for use by each child.		
17. Safe access is provided to secured/fenced outdoor play area that is free of harmful objects.		

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES	NO	1	2	3	4	N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES
18. Resilient materials are used under outdoor climbing apparatus outdoors.								
19. There is a minimum of 75 square feet of outdoor space per child using area at any one time. (Include sketch with dimensions.)								
20. There is provision for safe pickup and delivery for all children.								
21. Facility vehicles and drivers assure safe transportation for children.								
___ a. Vehicles are clean, in good repair, inspected, and licensed.								
___ b. Drivers are properly licensed and informed in child passenger safety precautions.								
___ c. Child passenger restraints and/or seat belts are provided and used as required by law.								
___ d. Proof of liability coverage is available.								
Health								
22. Trash and garbage are stored and disposed of in a sanitary manner in child-proof containers.								
23. If a kitchen is used by the program, it is safe and sanitary:								
___ a. Clean and disinfected								

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES	NO	1	2	3	4	N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES
___ b. Adequately equipped for proper storage, preparation, and serving								
___ c. Dish washing done in an approved sanitary manner								
___ d. Free of through traffic and hazards								
24. If food is provided, it is nutritious and served hygienically:								
___ a. Current menus for snacks and meals are posted.								
___ b. Nutritious, well-balanced meals and snacks are served hygienically.								
___ c. Adequate child-sized portions are served.								
25. Mealtimes promote good nutritional habits.								
___ a. Children are encouraged to serve and feed themselves.								
___ b. Chairs, tables, and eating utensils are suitable for the size and developmental levels of the children.								
___ c. Meals and snack times are pleasant social and learning experiences for children.								
___ d. Foods related to children's cultural backgrounds are served periodically.								
___ e. At least one adult sits with children during meals.								
26. Drinking water is available to children in a sanitary manner.								

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES	NO	1	2	3	4	N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES
(27.) Staff is continually alert to the health of each child:								
___ a. Hand washing is done by staff and children before meals and snacks, after toileting and nose wiping, etc.								
___ b. Faces are washed as needed before eating.								
___ c. Individual medical problems and accidents are recorded.								
___ d. Individual medical problems and accidents are reported to staff, director, and families.								
___ e. Disposable gloves are used when handling blood and body fluids.								
28. Toilet facilities are sanitary and safe:								
___ a. Toilets and hand-washing facilities are clean.								
___ b. Soap and disposable towels are provided.								
___ c. Changing and disposing of diapers (if applicable) is done in a sanitary manner.								
29. The facility is cleaned daily to disinfect bathroom fixtures and to remove trash.								
30. An adequate first-aid kit is readily available, and one is taken on field trips.								
31. The Poison Control telephone number and a one-ounce bottle of Syrup of Ipecac (within shelf date) are on hand.								

30

31

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES	NO	1	2	3	4	N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES
32. The facility is smoke-free.								
33. A cot and isolation area are provided for ill children.								
34. Any animals on premises are cared for, healthy, and free of hazardous diseases. (Refer to local Health Department for regulations.)								
35. Water supply is Health Department approved.								
(36.) Health and immunization records and emergency medical release forms are on file for each child and are updated annually.								
37. Staff members receive annual training in medical emergencies. At least one staff member on duty has current certification in first aid and/or cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).								
38. Sprinklers offer a safe water experience. A teacher is always within arm's reach, back is never turned and, whenever possible, staff-to-child ratio exceeds minimum licensing requirements. Water tables are emptied daily, or more frequently as required, and disinfected regularly. Unfiltered wading pools/swimming pools are not used.								

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS							REMARKS/EXAMPLES
	YES	NO	1	2	3	4	N/A	
39. Whenever children are swimming or wading, a qualified CPR or lifeguard is present.								
40. Records of current medical examinations and annual tuberculin testing are on file for all staff.								
41. Written procedures exist to handle illnesses of staff members.								
42. Individual washable mats or cots with sheets (if appropriate to the program) are provided as needed and cleaned regularly.								
43. Floors and rugs are routinely kept clean and carpets are shampooed regularly.								
44. Materials and furnishings are kept clean.								
45. Clean clothing is available in case of accidents. Clothing is labeled with child's name.								

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES	NO	1	2	3	4	N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES
II. Foster Physical and Intellectual Growth and Development and Creative Expression								
Children's growth in these areas is influenced by the teacher's knowledge and understanding of child development, appropriate planning, materials, and activities.								
Planning and Implementation								
(1.) Learning objectives/expectations for children are:								
___ a. Consistent with the overall philosophy of the program.								
___ b. Appropriate for the age and developmental level of each child.								
___ c. Based on ongoing observation of individual children. (These observations are used to determine the need and interest levels in physical, intellectual, language, and social/emotional areas of development.)								
___ d. Modified to accommodate children's individual abilities, learning styles, and needs.								
___ e. Used to document children's progress. (Submit written documentation.)								
(2.) Daily planning includes:								
___ a. Individual experiences								
___ b. Small group experiences								

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS								REMARKS/EXAMPLES
	YES	NO	1	2	3	4	N/A		
___ c. Total group experiences appropriate to the developmental level of the children									
___ d. Curriculum relevant and reflective of the population served									
3. Small group experiences for developing skills and concepts are organized so that each child has individual attention and is free to express ideas.									
(4.) Current daily and/or weekly time schedules are posted, and families have access to them. (Provide documentation)									
(5.) The schedule provides activities that are:									
___ a. Balanced (active/quiet; group/individual; indoor/outdoor)									
___ b. Developmentally appropriate									
___ c. Designed so that all children experience success									
(6.) Activity plans for each program day are available and are specific as to the experiences provided under language, art, etc.									
7. Activity plans address each child's developmental abilities, needs, and experiences.									
8. Individualized programs planned for children with special needs are incorporated within the daily experiences.									

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES	NO	1	2	3	4	N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES
(9.) All children have opportunities during each day to make choices in selecting activities and materials.								
(10.) All children are encouraged to structure their own thinking and gain mastery over their environment by								
___ a. Observing								
___ b. Exploring								
___ c. Discovering								
___ d. Questioning								
___ e. Problem solving								
___ f. Sharing experiences								
___ g. Initiating activities								
___ h. Making choices								
(Examples of each of the above should be observable.)								
(11.) Concrete experiences are provided that help children develop time, space, classification, and number concepts.								
(12.) All children are helped to acquire and use language to communicate information, thoughts, and feelings, and to talk and listen with understanding.								
___ a. Children with little expressive language are encouraged to communicate with sounds, gestures, or other forms of communication.								

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES NO 1 2 3 4 N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES
___ b. Attempts are made to recognize the child's individuality by responding appropriately to efforts to communicate. If needed, staff members learn alternative forms of communication.		
___ c. Adults provide a good language model.		
___ d. All children are provided daily experiences with language. (Examples include reading and telling stories, pictures, puppets, conversation.)		
(13.) Books are available to children for use during each day.		
(14.) All children have a variety of fine motor experiences (i.e. clay, puzzles, peg boards, etc.) to encourage development of hand-eye coordination.		
(15.) All children have opportunities during each day for gross motor activities such as running, jumping, climbing, balancing, pedaling, throwing and catching.		
(16.) All children are engaged in a wide range of experiences in each of the following:		
___ a. Music and movement		
___ b. Art		

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS							REMARKS/EXAMPLES
	YES	NO	1	2	3	4	N/A	
___ c. Dramatic play								
(Programs should be able to give current example of these.)								
(17.) There is little or no emphasis on patterns or final product in the use of art media.								
(18.) All children are involved on a regular basis in science activities that are designed to increase observation and communication skills.								
(19.) Children have opportunities to work with natural materials such as soil, sand, water, clay and wood.								
20. Outdoor experience is a part of the child's daily routine (weather permitting).								
(21.) The total environment reflects global, cultural, ethnic, age, and gender diversity.								
<u>Equipment and Materials</u>								
22. There is enough child-sized furniture in good condition for the number and ages of children.								
(23.) A wide variety of the following learning materials are available, in good working condition, and used regularly:								

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES	NO	1	2	3	4	N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES
(Check items)								
___ a. Painting equipment (large brushes, large newsprint)								
___ b. Collage/paste/glue/scissors/crayons								
___ c. Dough/clay/accessories								
___ d. Blocks/accessories								
___ e. Sand/accessories								
___ f. Water/accessories								
___ g. Woodworking tools and materials								
___ h. Dramatic play accessories								
___ Housekeeping								
___ Puppets								
___ Prop boxes								
___ Other _____								
___ i. Manipulatives (puzzles, beads, pegs, games, form boards, etc.)								
___ j. Books, records, and cassette tapes								
___ k. Rhythm instruments (can be homemade)								
___ l. Cooking equipment								
___ m. Climbing equipment								
___ n. Wheel toys								
___ o. Balls								
___ p. Other _____								
(24) An ample variety of materials is arranged on low, open shelves so that all children can make choices independently.								

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES	NO	1	2	3	4	N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES
25. The room is arranged so that all children move easily throughout the play space, supervision is possible, children may play/work without interruption, and children needing adaptive equipment (wheelchairs, walkers, etc.) can participate without being unduly restricted.								
(26.) Materials and furniture are arranged in an orderly manner, with clearly defined activity areas for various types of learning experiences.								
(27.) There is a quiet area for children who wish to be alone.								
(28.) The facility is adapted to meet the needs of individual children. For example:								
___ a. Sound absorbent materials are used (such as rugs, ceiling tiles, etc.) to lessen the level of noise for children who have a hearing loss or are easily distracted.								
___ b. Auditory and tactile cues (such as labels and visual aids) that are simple and uncluttered are used to structure the room and define various areas for children with visual disabilities.								
___ c. Major changes in room arrangement and daily program schedules are kept to a minimum for children who have visual disabilities or difficulty adapting to change.								

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES	NO	1	2	3	4	N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES
III. Build Positive Self-Esteem and Individual Responsibility								
Adults relate in positive ways to all children. The staff:								
1. Evidence pleasure and enjoyment in working with children.								
2. Show respect for children by addressing each child by name (with minimal use of impersonal and collective terms such as "group," "class," "boys and girls,") and model acceptance of <u>all</u> children.								
3. Smile, touch, hold, and speak to children at their eye level to foster communication.								
4. Interact with <u>all</u> children in a positive manner, emphasizing their mutual contribution, cooperation, and independence.								
5. Provide space for each child's belongings.								
6. Use photographs, displays of children's work, and mirrors placed at the child's eye level to focus attention on the individual.								
7. Provide individual children with direct positive feedback about their performance. ("John, you worked a long time on your painting.")								

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES NO 1 2 3 4 N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES
(8.) Provide positive reinforcement, encouragement and supportive statements. Competition, comparison, shaming, and criticism are avoided.		
(9.) Encourage children at their different levels of abilities to develop self-reliance and make individual decisions regarding use of materials and equipment and participation in activities.		
(10.) Provide a balance between activities initiated by children and those initiated by adults.		
(11.) Actively involve children in helping to solve classroom problems by working through disagreements and conflicts at feeling/thinking levels.		
(12.) Show respect for the child's family and community by recognizing and incorporating into the program the family's customs.		
(13.) Refrain from demeaning remarks to other adults or children about a child's or children's behavior.		
(14.) Help children cope with both success and failure by assisting them to express feelings in words or in acceptable actions.		
(15.) Promote social interaction between all children regardless of abilities.		

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES	NO	1	2	3	4	N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES
IV. Develop and Maintain Positive Interaction of Children and Adults								
Interactions between children and staff provide opportunities for children to develop an understanding of self and others and are characterized by warmth, personal respect, positive support, and responsiveness.								
1. Staff express respect and affection for children by listening and speaking to them and playing with them.								
2. Staff model, encourage, plan for, and guide development of positive social actions and feelings (i.e. honesty, cooperation, conflict resolution, compromise, friendship, affection, humor, acceptance of diversity).								
3. Staff encourage independence in children by allowing involvement in routine activities, including:								
___ a. Picking up toys								
___ b. Wiping spills								
___ c. Personal grooming (toileting/washing hands)								
___ d. Obtaining and caring for materials								
___ e. Other self-help skills: _____								
4. Staff speak with children in a friendly, positive, courteous manner.								

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES	NO	1	2	3	4	N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES
5. Staff listen to and converse frequently with children, asking open-ended questions and speaking individually to children.								
6. Staff establish and maintain a reasonable system of limits that are understood by children and adults.								
7. Staff use positive techniques for guidance, including:								
___ a. Discussion/Explanation								
___ b. Redirection								
___ c. Anticipation								
___ d. Elimination of potential problems								
___ e. Positive reinforcement								
___ f. Encouragement rather than competition, comparison, or criticism								
8. Staff abstain from corporal punishment or other humiliating or frightening discipline techniques.								
9. There is an adequate adult-child ratio for each group of children. Adequacy is determined by staff competence, physical facility, children's needs, and the length of the day. Minimum ratios of qualified adults to children are:								
___ a. At least 1 adult to 8 children, age 2								
___ b. At least 1 adult to 10 children, ages 3 and 4								

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES	NO	1	2	3	4	N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES
___ c. At least 1 adult to 16 children, age 5 and up (if not in public school)								
___ d. At least 1 adult to 20 children, public school kindergarten								
___ e. Groups composed of mixed ages of children two years and older shall have no less than one adult to ten children with a maximum of four two-year-olds. When there are more than four two-year-olds in a mixed group, the adult/child ratio shall be no less than one adult to eight children.								
___ f. In the case of children with special needs, the above ratios are adjusted accordingly.								
10. Each staff member has primary responsibility for and develops a close attachment to an identified group of children. Every attempt is made to have continuity of adults who work with children. Children spend the majority of the time interacting with the same person each day.								
11. Staff members who have direct contact with children are provided with appropriate breaks.								

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES NO 1 2 3 4 N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES

V. Communication and Coordination Between Home/Center

Coordination of home and school/center expectations and practices is essential to ensure maximum benefit to the child. A variety of options should be provided for family involvement in the program.

1. Information about the program is given to families. It may be in a handbook or printed handouts. It should include:

___ a. Written description of the program's philosophy
___ b. Written description of the program's rules and fees (if applicable)
___ c. Clearly communicated discipline and guidance procedures
___ d. Health guidelines for child's attendance and dismissal
___ e. Other _____

(Submit written documentation for accreditation)

2. There is a planned process for orienting the child and family to the program. It may include:

___ a. Pre-enrollment visit to the program
___ b. Gradual introduction to classroom
___ c. Parent/family orientation meetings.
___ d. Parent/family/child open house.

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES	NO	1	2	3	4	N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES
___ e. Home visit								
___ f. Other _____								
3. There is a planned procedure for personal contact between staff and families. This may include:								
___ a. Greeting and brief conversation on arrival and departure								
___ b. Positive phone calls								
___ c. Positive notes								
___ d. Other _____								
4. Family members are encouraged to visit the program and observe their child anytime.								
5. Family members have opportunity to be involved in the ongoing program <u>with their children</u> in some of the following ways:								
___ a. Celebrations								
___ b. Field trips								
___ c. Sharing expertise, skills, interests, and family customs								
___ d. Sharing a meal/snack								
___ e. Assisting in the classroom								
___ f. Special projects								
___ g. Parent Advisory Council or P.T.A.								
___ h. Program evaluation								
___ i. Other _____								

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES	NO	1	2	3	4	N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES
6. Frequent and varied opportunities for sharing between home and center may include:								
___ a. Bulletin board with current information								
___ b. Recognition of families' ethnic and cultural backgrounds as observed in toys, bulletin boards, photographs, etc.								
___ c. Occasional sharing of special home possessions								
___ d. Other _____								
7. Various methods are used to facilitate good communication between home and center. These include some of the following:								
___ a. Family conferences								
Frequency:								
___ Regularly scheduled: _____								
___ As needed								
___ Private space available								
___ b. Copies of information about a child that are forwarded to others are given to families on request								
___ c. Home visits								
___ d. Progress reports								
Frequency:_____								
___ e. Newsletters								
Frequency:_____								
___ g. Special notices								
___ h. Phone calls								

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES	NO	1	2	3	4	N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES
8. Resource information and services are available to families. These may include:								
___ a. Materials and/or information on community resources								
___ b. Parent/Family groups								
___ 1) Support groups								
___ 2) Education groups								
___ 3) Interest groups								
___ 4) Other _____								
___ c. Individual counseling and/or referral services								
___ d. Other _____								
(9.) There is a planned procedure for informing and involving families and children in the transition process to the next program setting.								
(10.) Collaboration with Special Services Providers								
The following items apply when the special needs of children are being met by special services providers (e.g. speech, language, physical, or occupational therapists):								
___ a. Information about child's progress is shared with special services providers after securing the family's consent. This may be in written or verbal form, such as daily journals, letters, phone conversations, etc.								

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS							REMARKS/EXAMPLES
	YES	NO	1	2	3	4	N/A	
___ b. Open communication is encouraged between staff and those individuals who are providing specialized services.								
___ c. Families are informed of communication between staff and special services providers.								
___ d. Staff members are encouraged to participate in IEP and/or IFSP meetings as appropriate.								
___ e. Efforts are made to have special services (such as speech/language) delivered within the child's normal program setting to promote the child's ability to use skills in everyday life.								

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES	NO	1	2	3	4	N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES
VI. Maintain Effective Staff Communication and Efficient Management Practices								
Effective administration requires knowledge about all areas of the program, including staff qualifications, development, and evaluation, program policies and procedures, and record-keeping. (Items in this section should be verifiable through written documentation.)								
Staff Development and Qualifications								
1. A written description of program goals and objectives is shared with staff, families, and visitors.								
2. Written job descriptions for all staff are updated regularly.								
3. Classroom teachers are educated in early childhood education/child development/early childhood special education:								
___ a. Teachers in public school programs are appropriately certified								
___ b. Teachers in charge of a group in non-public school programs have one of the following:								
1) BS or BA Degree in Early Childhood Education, Early Childhood Special Education, or Child Development								

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES NO 1 2 3 4 N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES
2) BS or BA Degree with one year experience working with young children and inservice training in Early Childhood Education, Early Childhood Special Education, or Child Development		
3) AA Degree in Early Childhood Education, Early Childhood Special Education, or Child Development with one year experience with young children.		
4) CDA credential with two years experience with young children.		
5) Five years' experience working with young children with documented inservice training/workshops in Early Childhood Education, Early Childhood Special Education, or Child Development.		
6) Other comparable education and experience.		
(4.) Program administrators have a minimum of one of the following:		
___ a. BS or BA degree in Early Childhood Education, Early Childhood Special Education, or Child Development and one year experience with young children.		

72

73

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES	NO	1	2	3	4	N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES
___ b. BS or BA degree with training in Early Childhood Education, Early Childhood Special Education, or Child Development and one year experience with young children.								
___ c. Two years of college with a minimum of 12 hours of Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, Child Development, Special Education, and two years experience with young young children.								
___ d. Training and experience of program administrators may include child development, recreation, elementary education, early childhood, special education, or related field.								
(5.) There is a formalized ongoing inservice and career development program that includes:								
___ a. Orientation for new staff								
___ b. Regular supervision, including classroom observation								
___ c. Opportunities for professional growth through child development (and special education, as appropriate) workshops, conferences, course work, etc.								
___ d. Inservice plan								
___ e. Access to resource materials								
___ f. Provision for visiting other programs								

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS YES	NO	1	2	3	4	N/A	REMARKS/EXAMPLES
___ g. Participation in early childhood /early childhood special education professional organizations								
___ h. General and specific information about young children with disabilities (i.e. books, journals, videos, etc.) is available to staff.								
Administrative Practices and Evaluation								
6. There is a personnel practices and procedures manual available to all staff.								
7. Fees and policies for admission and attendance are clearly stated and available in written form.								
8. There is appropriate insurance coverage for children and adults.								
9. The center keeps appropriate fiscal records that include evidence of long-range budgeting and sound fiscal planning. (Administrative report will suffice as documentation.)								
10. Records are kept on program operations, such as attendance records, board or advisory committee reports, special activities, etc.								
(11.) There is a systematic method for keeping and transmitting children's developmental records.								

QUALITY INDICATORS	RATINGS								REMARKS/EXAMPLES
	YES	NO	1	2	3	4	N/A		
12. There is a system for documenting in writing the person or persons authorized to pick up a child.									
13. All staff are evaluated regularly. Evaluations are recorded and discussed with individual staff members.									
14. Staff, other professionals, and families are involved in evaluating the program's effectiveness in meeting the needs of children and families.									

STATE OF MISSOURI

APPLICATION FOR ACCREDITATION OF AN EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM
(2 1/2 - 6 years)

SECTION I. **ADMINISTRATION**

Name of program _____

Program Address _____
(Street) (City) (Zip Code)

Phone (____) _____

Type of Program: (check all that apply)

_____ Religious Sponsorship _____ For Profit _____ Day Care (4 hours or more)

_____ Public School _____ Non-Profit _____ Half Day (less than 4 hours)l

_____ Private School _____ Other _____

_____ Kindergarten

Has program been in operation for one full year? _____ Give first date of operation: _____

Is program licensed? _____ If not licensed, does program have letter of exemtion? _____

Program Director _____ Phone (____) _____

Administrator or Board President _____ Phone (____) _____

SECTION II. **PROGRAM INFORMATION**

Ages of children served _____

Number of children ages 2 1/2-6 years: _____ Number of classrooms for 2 1/2-6 years: _____

Hours of operation: _____ Days per week _____ Months per year_____
(if less than 12, specify months of operation)

Names of teaching staff for ages 2 1/2 - 6 years: Age(s) Assigned

_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____

Brief program description (25 words of less):

_____
_____
_____
_____

If program meets state definition of day care, please attach copy of state license or letter of exemption. If in doubt about program definitions, contact Missouri Division of Family Services.

VERIFICATION OF SELF-STUDY AND REQUEST FOR VISITATION BY REVIEW TEAM

As _____ of the _____
(Title) (Name of Program)

I certify that the above-named program has completed the Self-Study and submitted all necessary materials to the Missouri Center for Voluntary Accreditation of Childhood Education Programs. I understand that the program has the right of advance approval of Review Team members assigned and of the proposed date(s) of on-site visit(s). Enclosed is a check in the amount of $_____ for the accreditation fee. I also understand that the program will pay mileage expenses ($0.20/mile) to the Review Team members who request this, at the time of the exit interview.

_____
Signature of Director and/or Board President

_____
Date

Please make check for accreditation fee payable to Missouri Center for Voluntary Accreditation and mail to the center at Stephens College, Box 2022, Columbia, MO 65215. [See current Fact Sheet for information on fees.]

[TO BE FILLED OUT BY THE REVIEW TEAM LEADER AT THE COMPLETION OF THE EXIT INTERVIEW AND RETURNED WITH THE EXIT INTERVIEW NOTES TO THE MISSOURI CENTER FOR VOLUNTARY ACCREDITATION]

VERIFICATION OF ACCREDITATION REVIEW

This is to verify that _____
(Name of Program)
has received an accreditation team review that was completed on _____
(Date of exit interview)

It is recommended that the program be: _____ Accredited
_____ (Indicate # of accreditation (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, etc.)

_____ Granted time extension

_____ Accreditation has NOT been achieved within the one-year extension, and the accreditation process is now terminated

Address of Program _____ Phone _____

Ages served: _____ Infant/Toddler _____ 2 1/2 - 6 _____ School Age

		Check if mileage expense has been paid	
		Yes	No
Team Leader:	_____ (Signature)	_____	_____
Team Members:	_____ (Signatures)	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____

Childhood Education Program Administrator or Director _____
(Signature)